Nearly all cooking

pottery is purchased; most of it is made in Dumaguete for none of the local womenfolk make their own pottery. In the near vicinity of Caticugan only one woman regularly made pottery that she bartered for food. Weaving of fine fabrics from banana fibers has ceased completely in the barrrio; the weaving of abaca cloth is rapidly declining, though a few women still weave abaca for skirts, men's shirts, and a few other purposes. Abaca clothing, however, is quite unpopular with the younger generation and the barriofolk's style of dress is being changed by the post-war traffic in used American clothing.

Few baskets are made today in Caticugan. The winnowing basket that is used daily is normally purchased in the poblacion or in Dumaguete. I never saw a woman making such a basket, though several Naga women were said to weave them. Tin basins have taken the place of wooden basins and metal spoons and forks are rapidly replacing those made of coconut shell. The most widespread handicraft in Caticugan is the weaving of sleeping mats and bags from buri fronds; this handicraft appears to be threatened by a decrease in palms.

The decline of barrio handicrafts has been recognized by the Philippine government. School programs attempt to perpetuate and revive certain handicrafts; however, the school programs I observed do not promise to be very successful. Advice on the development or modernization of cottage industries has been given by American experts as one means of reducing the chronic

high, with a capacity of about 2-1¼ pounds of clean rice; the largest was 9 inches high with a capacity of 4-1/2 pounds. It took her about two days to make the large pot; four or five of the smaller ones could be made in the same time--of course, after the clay had been gathered and prepared for working.

437 415 323

BURI WEAVING

285 ● 415

Weaving of buri (Cebuano: buli) palm bags and sleeping mats is the most widespread of all handicrafts in the Siaton River valley. Large buri bags (baluyut), four or five feet high, serve to store rice or shelled corn. Smaller bags (bolugasan) are used to carry shelled corn to the poblacion mills for grinding for storage. Sleeping mats (banig) are about three to five feet in width and four to six feet in length. Plate LXX,[1] A and B, shows the type of weave used for making both the bags and sleeping mats. Drawing B (Plate LXX) shows how the edges of the sleeping mats are finished. Weaving buri bags and mats is strictly a woman's job, although men cut the fronds.

352 285 [462]

Preparing the Buri for Weaving

285 314

Unopened immature buri fronds are cut from the tree's crown. The best time to cut the fronds was said to be the period of the new moon; if gathered at any other time the fronds are very brittle and difficult to weave. After the unopened fronds are cut, they are pulled apart and placed, fan-like, on the ground to dry for two or three days.

1 [See p. 703, cat. 285, or 116 -- Analyst]

PLATE LXX
Page 703

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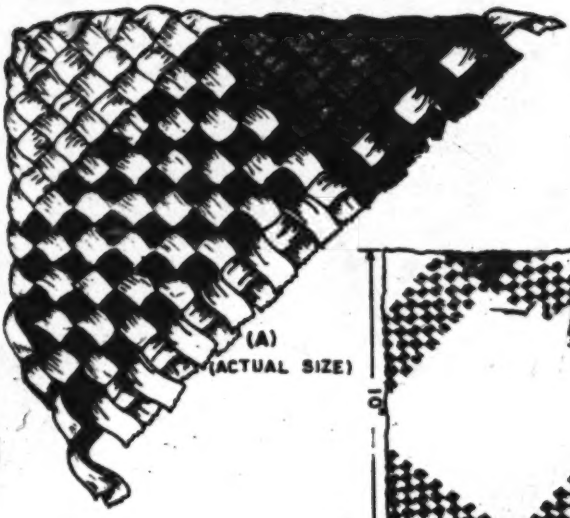
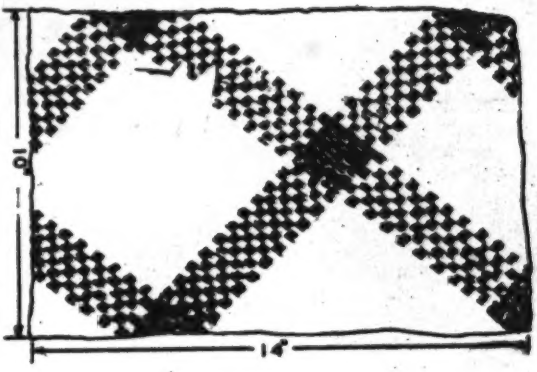
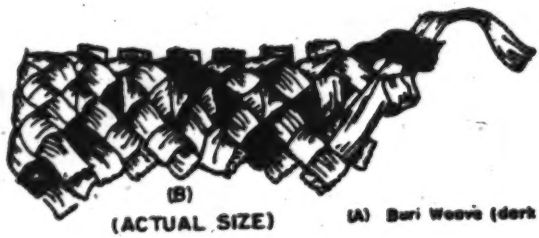




(C)

BURI PLAITING STYLE



(A) Buri Weave (dark strips are red)

(B) Edge finishing

(C) Mat design (cross-hatching red)

285 ●

When the fronds are dry the stiff mid-rib is stripped from each individual leaf. The leaves then are smoothed by running them over the back of a knife or seashell. Buri leaves are cut into fairly regular widths by use of a rattan guide (batacan). (See Plate LXXI.)[1] The batacan is hooked around a leaf and a small knife inserted just above the notch facing the worker; it penetrates the leaf to a second notch on the back of the batacan. By moving the batacan and the knife down the leaf together an even strip is cut. Buri strips, ready for weaving, are called lila.

After a sufficient supply of lilas is prepared, the plaiting of the bag or mat is begun. The only type of plaiting used is illustrated in Plate LXX. Strands used to plait mats and baskets are fairly broad and flat, producing a checkerboard type of design; actually little can be done in plaiting such strands except to pass them alternately over and under. Sleeping mats, unlike bags, are usually plaited with a double thickness. Only one woman in Caticugan made any attempt to decorate her buri bags. The sibokao tree's heartwood makes a brown dye; sometimes, though rarely, she used tanbark as a dye "because I do not have to buy the sibokao to make a dye." She dyed a few buri strips, plaiting them into the bag, making a simple geometric design. Plate LXX, C, illustrates the design made in some placemats she plaited for me.

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531
[389]

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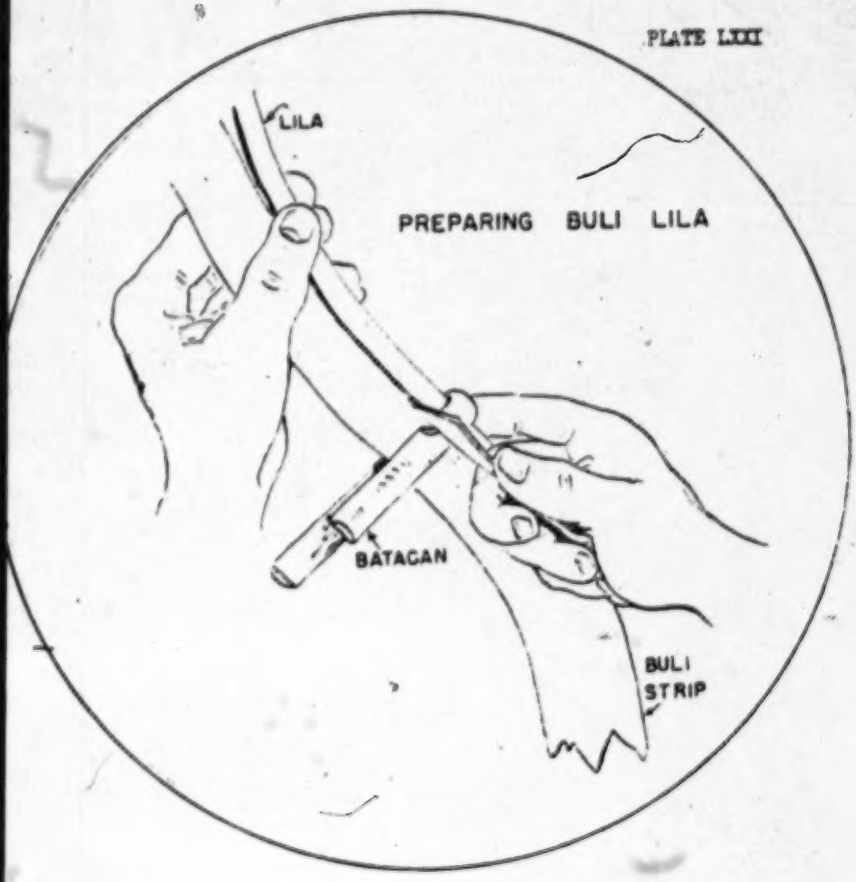
314
178

The decreasing number of buri palms in the vicinity of Caticugan may pose a problem for the barriofolk in the

1 [See p.705, cat. 285 -- Analyst]

PLATE LXXI



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not-too-distant future. Since the palm is usually killed to make suhang before it flowers, the reproductive cycle of the tree is disturbed. Most people agree that there were more buri palms a decade ago than today. If the palms become scarce the people will have a difficult time finding an adequate substitute for buri. However, this potential problem (I may exaggerate it) does not seem to worry the

314
285
178

barriofolk. Possibly the developing jute industry of the Philippines will replace buri plaiting in the future.

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BARRIO BASKETS

415

Three major types of baskets used by the barriofolk of Caticugan are: (1) the harvest basket, bukag; (2) the winnowing basket, niggo or ayagang; (3) and the shallow kalalaw used in abaca weaving. Several other types of baskets were made by schoolchildren in the poblacion but never used in the barrio; they are taught to make small bags and baskets that can be sold as curios. Basket-making is said to be predominately a woman's job, although some men make bukags. Baskets were made so rarely in Caticugan that I never saw any of these three types being plaited.

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462

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438

The bukag, previously mentioned in connection with the corn harvests, is a loosely plaited basket of thin strips of bamboo and rattan about 2 feet in height with an 18-inch opening. The bukag is roughly made and does not take much time to plait. This type of basket, to my knowledge, is always made by the barriofolk; I never saw any for sale in either the poblacion or Dumaguete. They are used, almost entirely, to carry unhusked corn from the fields to the house or storehouse.

The wide shallow basket used for winnowing the chaff from pounded rice or ground corn is called the niggo or ayagang. This basket also is plaited from rattan and thin pieces of bamboo. An increasing number of them are

CB 285 438

purchased by the barriofolk in the poblacion or Dumaguete; I often saw women, sometimes from Caticugan, returning home on the bus with winnowing baskets purchased in Dumaguete. Dumaguete's public marketplace had many stores that sold this type of basket. Two women who lived in Naga were said to plait and barter niggo baskets during harvest-time but I never observed them doing so. Unlike the bukag, the niggo is made sturdily and lasts for years with proper care.

CB 285 415

Kalalaw are small baskets used to coil abaca thread during the weaving process. Since so few women plait in Caticugan, I never saw kalalaw being plaited. They are made, like the niggo, from thin strips of bamboo and rattan. They usually come in sets of three or four since each size is used for a specific type of abaca thread. I measured one set of kalalaw baskets; the figures are in Table XLII.

TABLE XLII

KALALAW BASKET MEASUREMENTS (Inches)

Height	Width
16-1/2	11
14-1/2	10-1/2
12-1/2	8-1/2
10-1/2	7

P-CB 286 101

ABACA WEAVING

The three major areas of hand-weaving in the Philippines are: (1) northern Luzon (Ilocos region and the Mountain Province); (2) southern Luzon (Rizal and Bicol

ABACA FABRIC TYPES

20: Hart E-5 (1951) 1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA 14

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PLATE LXXVI

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